

SEVERAL YEARS AGO I discovered something startling about the moon which appears to have eluded scholars from at least the Classical Age through to the present.

The alphabet proves to be a serial mnemonic of lunation. The two dark nights at the beginning of the lunar cycle are figured as sighting vertices – ‘A’ initially inscribed on its side both in the Phœnician [◁] and the ancient Greek [▷] (‘B’: the vertex doubled, to denote the second dark night) – with the cross-stroke through them signifying ‘nothing sighted’. On the third night of lunation waxing crescent appears; our third letter, ‘C’ (Greek *gamma* and Phœnician *gimel* both crook-shaped). Ninth night, half-moon; eighth Greek letter, *theta*, an ‘O’ bisected with a diameter (Semitic *teth*; Egyptian ‘t’, the hieroglyphic ‘half-moon’, figuring the terminal letters of ‘Thoth’). Fifteenth and sixteenth nights, full moon: ‘O’ & ‘II’ (the ‘squared’ full moon) the 15th and 16th letters – while ‘Q’ (an ‘O’ with telltale *descender*) is our 17th letter, reflecting the abominable 17th night of lunation when the moon embarks on its *descent* through the waning arc of the cycle. The ‘X’-form of the 22nd Greek letter *chi* reprises the prehistoric ‘cup-mark’, conceptualizing the twinning of half-moons (*ie*, crossed diameters), compounded on the 22nd or 23rd night of lunation. And the waning crescent on the 29th night is secreted in the projection of the seven ‘doubles’ of the Semitic alphabet: seven *terminal* forms of existing characters which are conceived to *succeed* the 22nd letter *tau*, beginning with *sin* the 21st – a retreat back through the sequence – and concluding with *vet*, or terminal *bet* (attention redirected to the interval between *gimel* & *bet*: the perfect place for the figment of a mirrored crescent), while ingeniously returning the cycle to its beginning at *aleph*.

The discovery has excited a torrent of arresting insights – in four volumes – including the speculation that the seven stars (*shadowed* by the ‘seven sisters’) not only refer to the seven focal spectres of the lunation – opposing crescents,

opposed half-moons, twin full moons & first waning phase (each ‘married’ on its corresponding *daytime* to an aspect of the goddess in her domain of the underworld) – but also represent the pivotal deities of mythology: Horus (Ares) waxing crescent; Thoth (Hermes) waxing half-moon; Amon (Apollo) first full moon; Ra (Zeus) second full moon; Set (Poseidon) inaugural waning phase; Ptah (Hephæstus) waning half-moon; Osiris (Hades/Pluto) waning crescent. The two dark nights fall to Isis and her twin Nephthys (or in the Greek, Artemis, who also manifests as a notable twin – Apollo’s) emphasizing the conception of ‘twin dark nights’ complementing the ‘two full moons’ at the diametrical pole of the lunation – opposed *stations* both disposed to twins.

Regents of the Alphabet

DAY	LUNAR PHASE	OLYMPIAN	EGYPTIAN	LETTER	
1	<i>no moon</i>	DEMETER	ISIS	⤴	1
2	<i>no moon</i>	ARTEMIS	NEPHTHYS	B	2
3	<i>waxing crescent</i>	ARES	HORUS	C	3
9	<i>waxing half</i>	HERMES	THOTH	⊖	8
15	<i>first full moon</i>	APOLLO	AMON	O	15
16	<i>second full moon</i>	ZEUS	RA	Π	16
17	<i>first waning</i>	POSEIDON	SET	Q	17
23	<i>waning half</i>	HEPHÆSTUS	PTAH	X	22
29/30	<i>crescent</i>	HADES / PLUTO	OSIRIS	double	

Improbable and unorthodox as it may at first appear, this speculation is amply supported on reconsidering the myths with the respective *lunar attributes of the gods* imported. To give one example, the *Riddle of the Sphinx*: “What is it that goes on four legs in the morning, on two at midday, and on three in the evening?” [APOLLODORUS III.v.8] History rests on the explanation that Œdipus banished the Sphinx by guessing that she referred to Man, who crawls in his youth, walks upright when grown & on a cane in old age.

Yet as a lunar allegory, the *temporal* clue in this explicit solution may be expanded to a more insightful exposition.

Figuring the length of the lunation at $29\frac{1}{2}$ days invites the projection of 59 half-days ($29\frac{1}{2} \times 2$). The two dark nights thus comprise 4 half-days (walking on all-fours). The 26 spectres from 'waxing crescent on the third night' to 'the phase visible on the night before waning crescent', project 52 half-days (each spectre advancing through two 'legs', daytime and nighttime; the two legs at *midday* further conjuring the twin full moons at the apex or *midpoint* of lunation). The phase of the waning crescent, then, must extend 3 half-days in our model of a standardized $29\frac{1}{2}$ -day lunation, to complete the cycle (an *old man* – the final phase – on his cane): $4 + 52 + 3 = 59$. The correct answer to the riddle wasn't in fact, Man, but Moon...

In a calendar comprised of alternating 29-day and 30-day months – like that employed by both Greeks & Hebrews – Œdipus (*oldman* 'swell-foot') would inimitably personify the variable month: completing his journey in 29 days the first month and the same journey the next in thirty (a swollen measure). The myth, like many other Greek myths, preserves the distinction between a new 'heretical' calendrical measure employing the variable month, and the entrenched calendar of Mesopotamia and Egypt projecting a year of twelve idealized 30-day months (completed with 5 annual intercalary days in Egypt, or an additional 30-day month every six years in Mesopotamia).

This is also the reason for the alternate cognomen of Hades – theophany of waning crescent – Pluto (meaning "wealthy"; *ie*, richer by an extra measure) accommodating the final phase of the longer female month of thirty days: the extra half-day conceived as an invariable addition to the terminal phase.

Osiris, consequently, is 'killed' twice by Set – once for the 29-day month & again for the 30-day month – the 14 pieces into which he dismembers the body, delimiting the interval

of the waning arc of the 30-day cycle: day 17 (first waning phase, Set's day) through day 30 (last waning phase, that of Osiris) = fourteen days – his 'missing' penis an effective subtraction for the male or 29-day month. Set 'kills' him merely by inaugurating the waning arc of the cycle, which precipitates the *downfall* of all waning (or Setting) phases.

Osiris – terminal form of Set – descends into the underworld where he *mates* with Isis during the two dark nights (crescent as *phallus*) begetting his heir, Horus, *avenging* spectre of the succeeding lunation (crescent as *blade*).

Submergence which further accounts for the *blindness* of Œdipus after copulating with his mother (the *darkness* of underworld) – the goddess giving birth to the lunation she will ultimately couple with. The killing of his father, accordingly, inters the spent lunation as predecessor.

Thus the composition of Horus confronting Set may be reviewed as a depiction of 'first waxing spectre' figuratively complementing 'first waning spectre' (with opposing Eyes of Horus and Set surveying their respective arcs of lunation: that of Horus oriented as 'rising to its brightest spectacle' and that of Set 'descending from its brightest point').

The Classical fuss over sungods appears to have obviated the possibility that more-ancient texts and traditions might in actuality allude to the fluctuations in *lunar* brilliance (the "brightness" of *arge*, for example – as in 'Argo' and 'Argos' – relinquishing a signal reflection in the "silver" of *argent*).

Even more illuminating when you identify Adam's rib – a crescent, appropriately – with the extra day of the female month (the even month, notably, Eve's). NICK DRUMBOLIS

